

ALL GAVE SOME; SOME GAVE ALL

This week's veteran is Ronnie Throneburg.

Ronnie graduated from Assumption High School in 1964. He received his Bachelors degree from Southern Illinois University in 1968 and had started to graduate school when he was drafted in the fall of 1968. After training at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, and Fort Lewis, Washington, he was sent to Vietnam as a combat infantryman. Upon joining his platoon in the Mekong Delta area, he was given the choice of carrying a machete walking point or a radio on his back. He said choosing to carry the radio for six months in the field was the easiest decision of his military career. The remaining five months of his eleven-month Vietnam tour was spent as Communications Chief back at the firebase. His unit traveled to locations by helicopters based on radar sightings of humans. They would do ground sweeps of the area and set up night ambushes. After being out for a few days, they would be returned to firebase for two days before starting the whole process again. Ron said, "I always tried to make lemonade out of every day; some would always choose to make another day of misery for themselves." During his stay in Vietnam, he was in the Mekong Delta, Cuchi, and the Michelin Rubber Plantation areas. His unit was the 1st Infantry Division. When he returned to the states, he was stationed at Fort Riley, Kansas, and was then discharged in September of 1970.

Ron received the National Defense Service Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal, the Air Medal, the Combat Infantryman's Badge, and the Bronze Star with 1st Oak Leaf Cluster.

Before he went into the service, Ron was married to Carol Mentzer Throneburg who died in September of 2005. They have two children, Troy and Beth. Troy, their first, was born one month after Ron arrived in South Vietnam. He was on a patrol boat on the Mekong River when he received the news by radio that he had a baby girl named Ronald Trey. At first, he thought because of a stressful birth, Carol did not know what she was saying, but the error was due to poor radio communications. After discharge, Ron and Carol returned to SIU for their Masters degrees. For one year, he taught school in Waukegan, IL, before returning to the Assumption area to farm.

Thank you, Sergeant Ronald P. Throneburg, for what you gave for us.